

Witness Name: M Gill
Statement No: WITN1235001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MAUREEN GILL

I, Maureen Gill, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Maureen Gill of [GRO-C] Cumbria, [GRO-C] and my date of birth is [GRO-C] 1947. I have two daughters and I am a widow.
2. I am an affected person in relation to my late husband, David Joseph Gill, who passed away on 06.12.1998 as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII.
3. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to David's medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

4. David had severe Haemophilia A and was infected with HIV and Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII.
5. He received Factor VIII at The Newcastle Haemophilia Centre and The Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, between the mid 1970's up to his death in 1998. The exact dates of his infection remain unknown to me. His consultants were Peter Hamilton and Peter Jones.

6. David was provided with absolutely no information pertaining to the risks of receiving Factor VIII. In fact, he was advised that it was a "*miracle product which would change his life*". This was true; because our lives were affected by his infections, but not in the way in which the consultants foresaw.
7. David found out about having HIV accidentally. We were going away on a family holiday in August 1984 and he applied for a letter so that he could take his Haemophilia treatment and associated paraphernalia out of the country. The letter arrived just before we went away and it stated "*This Person is HIV Positive*". This was utterly soul destroying and worsened by the way in which this information was delivered. I did not feel like going away on holiday but I had to keep myself together for the sake of my two daughters.
8. As a result of this letter, we went to The Royal Victoria Infirmary with my daughters and we asked to be tested for HIV. We were petrified but thankfully mine and my daughters' results were negative. At the time, my little girls did not know what they were at the hospital for because they were too young to understand and we did not want them to be scared.
9. To the best of my recollection, nobody ever spoke with David to explain the realities of his HIV infection to him. He received no information about how to manage this virus or about the risks of transmitting the same to others.
10. I believe that the only reason that I was not infected with either HIV or Hepatitis C was because I had had a full hysterectomy in the late 1970's. I feel extremely lucky that I escaped infection.
11. Nobody ever told David that he was infected with Hepatitis C.

Section 3. Other Infections

12. I do not know whether David was exposed to vCJD or any other viruses.

Section 4. Consent.

13. David was tested for HIV and Hepatitis C without his knowledge and therefore impliedly, without his consent. I recall that David specifically asked to be tested for HIV and Hepatitis C on two occasions.

14. I believe that David might have been the subject of research because I think that his blood samples were sent to a hospital in Birmingham without his knowledge.

Section 5. Impact

15. When I found out that David had been infected with HIV I was completely devastated.

16. The mental effects of the infection on David were that he suffered serious depression. He was a private man and he became extremely isolated and he did not share the knowledge of his infection with anyone outside of the family. His intentions, in not sharing the news with anyone, were solely to shield his family from any possible stigma.

17. A few years after I found out that David was HIV positive, my youngest daughter found a condom and questioned me regarding the need for it as she knew that David had had a vasectomy. I sat her down and told her about her father's infection but my biggest worry was actually telling our oldest daughter as she was about to get married. I was sceptical as to whether her fiancée would go through with the wedding if he found out about David's infection. She told him that same night and luckily he stuck by her and the marriage went ahead.

18. David suffered many physical effects as a result of his infections, including a brain infection, bronchial pneumonia, sepsis, a knee infection, a chest infection and shingles.

19. In or around 1987 David asked me to look at his shoulder as it was in a terrible mess and it looked as though it had been burned because there were large blisters, each measuring approximately 1.5 square inches. I said "*Oh my God, this is the start of it*" and I was right. We made an emergency appointment and David was diagnosed with severe shingles.

20. In 1990, David was again diagnosed with severe shingles and was hospitalised. He received intravenous Acyclovir and I remained within him throughout his hospital stay. I vividly recall this hospital stay because the snow was so severe at that time.

21. The last year of David's life was incredibly traumatic. In May 1998, David had a bleed in his knee followed by a chest infection. Once again, he was admitted to hospital. He suffered from severe pain in his joints which necessitated the use of a walking stick. As the

infections took over, his entire mobility was compromised and he became wheelchair bound. We had to move into a bungalow to ensure that he had some sort of quality of life, despite the fact that he was dying at this stage.

22. In June 1998 David developed Fournier Gangrene which was terrifying for all of us. This required the removal of his entire scrotum. I stayed in the hospital with him for about 6 weeks. My oldest daughter had to deal with everything at home even though she had 3 young children to look after.
23. David was then discharged from hospital but only spent 2 weeks at home before being rushed back to hospital. This time he was diagnosed with a virus on his brain. The treatment he received to fight this virus made him feel worse; he could not sit up and every time he moved he was sick. He received strong medication to counteract the sickness.
24. David was in so much pain that he withdrew his consent for the treatment in relation to the virus on his brain. He was told by the doctors that he only had 3 months to live. I was so traumatised by this news that I started smoking again after 5 years of not smoking. On one occasion, I recall going outside the ward for a cigarette and upon my return, I collapsed and was in a complete mess. I was given medication by the nurses. The effects of David's infections were so traumatising for me and everything had taken its toll on both my physical and mental health.
25. Towards the end of David's life, I asked Doctor Hamilton about how much Factor VIII I needed to give David but the doctor replied "*Why don't you just let him go, Maureen?*". I also recall that David was bloated and I believed that he needed different medication but Doctor Hamilton took no notice of me and I felt as though David was just another patient that he wanted to get rid off. David lost his fight for life on 06.12.1998 and I miss him every day.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

26. To the best of my recollection, David was not offered any counselling or psychological support despite the fact that he suffered from depression, as a result of his HIV and Hepatitis C infections. However, David's medical practitioner prescribed Prozac as an attempt to help with David's depression.

27. I was never offered any counselling or psychological support and therefore I had to deal with things myself as best that I could.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

28. David received approximately £150 per month from the Macfarlane Trust and the availability of this help was communicated to him via his consultants.

29. I applied for grants following his passing and received small sums towards the upkeep of the house.

30. David was part of the HIV litigation in 1991 and received two payments of £16,000 and £18,000 which we used to equip the house to improve David's quality of life.

31. David received £30,000 and £50,000 from the Skipton Fund.

Section 8. Other Issues

32. My daughters are a part of the Tainted Blood Campaign Support Group and The Fatherless Generation.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

33. I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed.....

GRO-C

Dated.....

26-1-19